

REMARKS

This Amendment is responsive to the Office Action dated August 4, 2006.

Claims 1-27 were pending in the original application. In the Office Action, claims 1-10, 13-23 26 and 27 were rejected and claims 11, 12, 24 and 15 were objected to. In this Amendment, claims 4, 5, 11, 12, 24 and 25 were amended. Claims 1-27 remain for consideration.

Applicant submits that claims 1-27 are in condition for allowance and requests withdrawal of the rejections in light of the following remarks.

In the Specification

This application claims priority to earlier-filed U.S. Patent Application No. 10/160,892, filed June 3, 2002.

The specification has been amended accordingly.

§ 112 Rejection

Claims 4-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 4-6 has been amended to overcome the above objection. Accordingly, the above rejection is traversed.

§§ 102 and 103 Rejections

Claims 1, 3, 13, 15 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being clearly anticipated by Hopkins (U.S. Pat. No. 7,018,081).

Claims 2, 4-10 and 16-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hopkins (U.S. Pat. No. 7,018,081).

Claims 14 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hopkins (U.S. Pat. No. 7,018,081).

As stated above, this application claims priority to an earlier-filed application (U.S. Patent Application No. 10/160,892, filed June 3, 2002). The prior art reference cited by the Examiner has a filing date June 19, 2003. This date is after the filing date of Applicant's June 3, 2002 application. Applicant therefore believes that Hopkins is not a prior art reference and requests that the above §§102 and 103 rejections be removed.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 11-12 and 24-25 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 11, 12, 24 and 25 have been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicant believes that claims 11, 12, 24 and 25 are now in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

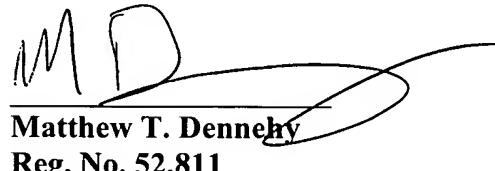
Applicant respectfully submits that all of the claims now pending in the application are in condition for allowance, which action is earnestly solicited.

If any issues remain, or if the Examiner has any further suggestions, he/she is invited to call the undersigned at the telephone number provided below.

A check in the amount of \$360 is enclosed for the claims and 1 month extension of time.

The Examiner is hereby authorized to charge any insufficient fees or credit any overpayment associated with the above-identified application to Deposit Account No. 06-0515.

Respectfully submitted,



Matthew T. Dennehy
Reg. No. 52,811

**STEPHEN E. FELDMAN, P.C.
12 East 41st Street
New York, New York 10017
(212) 532-8585**